

Week Ending Friday, August 25, 2006

The President's Radio Address

August 19, 2006

Good morning. This week I met with my national security, counterterrorism, and economic teams. We've set clear goals: We will defeat the terrorists and expand freedom across the world; we'll protect the American homeland and work tirelessly to prevent attacks on our country; and we will continue to unleash the entrepreneurial spirit of America and build a more prosperous future for all our citizens.

On Monday, I visited the Pentagon and the State Department, where we discussed the war on terror, including the recent conflict in Lebanon, a conflict which began with an unprovoked attack by Hizballah on Israel. Thanks to the leadership of Secretary Rice and Ambassador Bolton at the United Nations, the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution that will help bring an end to the violence and create a foundation for a sustainable peace.

The resolution calls for a robust international force to deploy to the southern part of Lebanon. This force will help Lebanon's legitimate armed forces restore the sovereignty of its democratic Government over all Lebanese territory and stop Hizballah from acting as a state within a state. The resolution will help make it possible for civilians in both Lebanon and Israel to return home in safety and begin rebuilding their lives without fear of renewed violence and terror.

The United States is now working with our international partners to turn the words of this resolution into action. The conflict in Lebanon is part of a broader struggle between freedom and terror that is unfolding across the region. Terrorists and their sponsors recognize that the Middle East is at a pivotal moment in its history. Freedom has brought hope to millions, and it's helped foster the development of young democracies from Baghdad to Beirut.

Yet these young democracies are still fragile, and the forces of terror are seeking to stop liberty's advance and steer newly free nations to the path of radicalism. The terrorists fear the rise of democracy because they know what it means for the future of their hateful ideology.

It is no coincidence that two nations that are building free societies in the heart of the Middle East, Lebanon and Iraq, are also the scenes of the most violent terrorist activity. We will defeat the terrorists by strengthening young democracies across the broader Middle East.

The way forward will be difficult, and it will require sacrifice and resolve. But America's security depends on liberty's advance in this troubled region, and we can be confident of the outcome because we know the unstoppable power of freedom.

On Tuesday, I went to the National Counterterrorism Center, where I was briefed by the fine professionals who work day and night to protect our Nation from terrorist attacks. Their efforts are vital, as we saw with the recent terrorist plot to destroy airliners headed for America.

I thanked the men and women of the intelligence community for all they did to help the British Government uncover and disrupt this vicious plot. This attempted attack is a reminder to us all: The terrorists remain determined to destroy innocent life on a massive scale, and we must be equally determined to stop them.

On Friday, I met with my economic advisers at Camp David, where we discussed our efforts to keep our economy growing and creating jobs. Our economy has created more than 5.5 million new jobs since August of 2003, more jobs than Japan and the 25 nations of the European Union combined. The unemployment rate is 4.8 percent. The productivity of America's workers is rising, and our economy grew at a strong annual rate of 4 percent during the first half of 2006.

To keep this momentum going, we're pursuing a strategy to sustain our economic growth and keep our economy competitive for decades to come. We will keep taxes low, restrain Federal spending, open new markets for American products, invest in new energy technologies, and help American workers develop the skills they need to compete for high-wage jobs.

American workers also need affordable, high-quality health care, and more transparency in our health care system can help. Next week, I will travel to Minnesota to discuss ways to ensure patients have access to more information about their health care. When patients know the facts about the price and quality of their health care options, they can make decisions that are right for them.

With all these steps, we're working to improve the health, security, and prosperity of the American people. Our Nation does not fear the future because we are determined to shape the future. We will build a more peaceful world and leave behind a stronger and better America for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:50 a.m. on August 18 at Camp David, MD, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 19. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 18 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

The President's News Conference

August 21, 2006

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Fancy digs you got here. Thanks for your hospitality. It's good to visit with you. I look forward to taking some of your questions. I do want to talk to you about the latest developments in Lebanon and what we're doing to ensure U.N. Security Council 1701 is implemented and its words are quickly put into action.

Resolution 1701 authorizes an effective international force to deploy to Lebanon, which is essential to peace in the region, and

it's essential to the freedom of Lebanon. An effective international force will help ensure the cessation of hostilities holds in southern Lebanon once the Israeli troops withdraw. An effective international force will help the Lebanese Army meet its responsibility to secure Lebanon's borders and stop them from acting as—and stop Hizballah from acting as a state within a state. An effective international force will help give displaced people in both Lebanon and Israel the confidence to return to their homes and begin rebuilding their lives without fear of renewed violence and terror.

An international force requires international commitment. Previous resolutions have failed in Lebanon because they were not implemented by the international community, and in this case, did not prevent Hizballah and their sponsors from instigating violence. The new resolution authorizes a force of up to 15,000 troops. It gives this force an expanded mandate. The need is urgent. The international community must now designate the leadership of this new international force, give it robust rules of engagement, and deploy it as quickly as possible to secure the peace.

America will do our part. We will assist the new international force with logistic support, command and control, communications, and intelligence. Lebanon, Israel, and our allies agreed that this would be the most effective contribution we can make at this time. We will also work with the leadership in the international force, once it's identified, to ensure that the United States is doing all we can to make this mission a success.

Deployment of this new international force will also help speed delivery of humanitarian assistance. Our Nation is wasting no time in helping the people of Lebanon. In other words, we're acting before the force gets in there. We've been on the ground in Beirut for weeks, and I've already distributed more than half of our \$50 million pledge of disaster relief to the Lebanese people who have lost their homes in the current conflict. Secretary Rice has led the diplomatic efforts to establish humanitarian corridors so that relief convoys can get through, to reopen the Beirut airport to passenger and humanitarian aid flights, and to ensure a steady fuel supply